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Eradication of poverty and other development issues: women in development

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 58 (see A/62/423, para. 2). Action on sub-item (b) was taken at the 26th and 32nd meetings, on 13 November and 7 December 2007. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/62/SR.26 and 32).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/62/L.31 and A/C.2/62/L.50

2. At the 26th meeting, on 13 November, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Women in development" (A/C.2/62/L.31), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 52/195 of 18 December 1997, 54/210 of 22 December 1999, 56/188 of 21 December 2001, 58/206 of 23 December 2003, 59/248 of 22 December 2004 and 60/210 of 22 December 2005 and all its other resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women,

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in four parts, under the symbol A/62/423 and Add.1-3.

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"*Reaffirming* the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century', and recalling the outcomes of all other relevant major United Nations conferences and summits,

"*Recalling* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential to eradicating poverty and hunger, in combating diseases and in stimulating development that is truly sustainable,

"*Stressing* the importance of creating a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all fields of life for the effective integration of women in development,

"*Recognizing* that access to basic affordable health care, preventive health information and the highest standard of health, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, is critical to women's economic advancement, that lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, and that the neglect of the full enjoyment of human rights by women severely limits their opportunities in public and private life, including the opportunity for education and economic and political empowerment,

"*Reaffirming* that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,

"*Reaffirming also* the significant contribution that women make to the economy, that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

"*Recognizing* that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

"*Noting* that gender biases in labour markets and women's lack of control over their own labour and earned income are also major factors in women's vulnerability to poverty, and noting as well that women's disproportionate responsibilities for domestic work result in a lack of economic autonomy and influence in economic decision-making within households,

"*Recognizing* that population and development issues, education and training, health, nutrition, the environment, water supply, sanitation, housing, communications, science and technology, and employment opportunities are

important elements for effective poverty eradication and the advancement and empowerment of women,

"*Recognizing also*, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights,

"*Reaffirming* the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the earliest possible date and at all levels by 2015 and that equal access to education and training at all levels, in particular, inter alia, in business, trade, administration, information and communication technologies and other new technologies, and the elimination of gender inequalities at all levels, are essential for gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication and to allow women's full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,

"*Recognizing* that poverty eradication and the achievement and preservation of peace are mutually reinforcing, and recognizing also that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development,

"*Aware* that, while globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have also made women, especially in developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility, including in the agricultural sector, and that special support, particularly for women who are small-scale farmers, and empowerment are necessary to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities of agricultural market liberalization,

"*Recognizing* that enhanced trade opportunities for developing countries, including through trade liberalization, will improve the economic condition of those societies, including women, which is of particular importance in rural communities,

"*Expressing its concern* that, while women represent an important and growing proportion of business owners, their contribution to economic and social development is constrained by, inter alia, the denial and lack of equal rights and access of women to education, training, information, support services and credit facilities, salaries, and control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production,

"*Also expressing its concern* about the underrepresentation of women in political and economic decision-making, and stressing the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programmes,

"*Noting* the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, including the United Nations Development Fund for Women, in facilitating the advancement of women in development, and noting the work done by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, and all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

"3. *Encourages* Member States, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system to accelerate efforts to increase the number of women in decision-making and to build their capacity as agents of change, and to empower women to participate actively and effectively in the development and implementation of poverty eradication policies, strategies and programmes;

"4. *Encourages* Member States to incorporate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of all development and poverty eradication strategies, and in this regard, calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts to develop methodologies and tools and to promote capacity-building;

"5. *Also encourages* Member States to promote more effective participation of national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment in formulating national development strategies, including poverty eradication strategies, and calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts in this regard;

"6. *Further encourages* Member States to continue to increase women's representation and participation in government decision-making so as to ensure that the priorities, needs and contributions of women are taken into consideration by, inter alia, providing access to training, developing measures to reconcile family and professional responsibilities, and eliminating gender stereotyping in appointments and promotions;

"7. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and the implications of violence against women and girls for the social and economic development of communities and States, and calls upon States to elaborate and implement plans of action to eliminate violence against women and girls;

"8. *Stresses* the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities that will generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

"9. *Encourages* Member States, with the support of the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypic attitudes to gender equality at work and to initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

"10. *Urges* all Member States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to bank

loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women, and to support women's access to legal assistance, and to encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in their policies and programmes;

"11. *Recognizes* the role of microfinance, including microcredit, in the eradication of poverty, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment, notes in this regard the importance of sound financial systems, and encourages the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions and the private sector;

"12. *Urges* Member States to encourage women entrepreneurs, including through education and training of women in business, administration and information and communications technology, and invites business associations to assist national efforts in this regard;

"13. *Also urges* Member States to design and revise laws that ensure that women are accorded full and equal rights to own land, housing and other property, including through inheritance, and to undertake administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital and appropriate technologies and access to markets and information;

"14. *Recognizes* the need to empower women economically and politically, particularly poor women, and in this regard encourages Governments, with the support of their development partners, to invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, as well as to create opportunities for economic empowerment, in order to alleviate for women and girls the burden of time-consuming everyday tasks;

"15. *Expresses its concern* that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis, and calls upon Governments and the international community to intensify efforts towards the goal of universal access to HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010;

"16. *Reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal in strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

"17. *Recognizes* the need for a substantial increase in official development assistance and other resources to developing countries in order for them to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second

World Assembly on Ageing, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations conferences and summits, and calls upon the international community to provide the necessary financial resources and other assistance in this regard;

"18. *Urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

"19. *Stresses* the importance of collecting and exchanging all relevant information needed on the role of women in development, including data on international migration, as well as the need to develop statistics disaggregated by age and sex, and in that regard encourages developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems;

"20. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session the sub-item entitled 'Women in development'."

3. At its 32nd meeting, on 7 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Women in development" (A/C.2/62/L.50), submitted by the Rapporteur of the Committee on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.31.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.50 (see para. 8).

6. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of the United States of America made a statement (see A/C.2/62/SR.32).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.50, draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.31 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/195 of 18 December 1997, 54/210 of 22 December 1999, 56/188 of 21 December 2001, 58/206 of 23 December 2003, 59/248 of 22 December 2004 and 60/210 of 22 December 2005 and all its other resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women, including the Declaration adopted at its forty-ninth session,[1]

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and recalling the outcomes of all other relevant major United Nations conferences and summits,

Reaffirming also the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[5] which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential to eradicating poverty and hunger, in combating diseases and in stimulating development that is truly sustainable,

Taking note with appreciation of the discussion on women in development in the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session, and recalling its agreed conclusions on "Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work",[6]

Recognizing that access to basic affordable health care, preventive health information and the highest standard of health, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, is critical to women's economic advancement, that lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, and that the neglect of the full enjoyment of human rights by women severely limits their opportunities in public and private life, including the opportunity for education and economic and political empowerment,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[5] See resolution 55/2.

[6] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2006/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. D.

Reaffirming that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,

Reaffirming also the significant contribution that women make to the economy, that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Noting that gender biases in labour markets and women's lack of control over their own labour and earned income are also major factors in women's vulnerability to poverty, and, together with women's disproportionate responsibilities for domestic work, result in a lack of economic autonomy and influence in economic decision-making within households and in society at all levels,

Recognizing that population and development issues, education and training, health, nutrition, the environment, water supply, sanitation, housing, communications, science and technology, and employment opportunities are important elements for effective poverty eradication and the advancement and empowerment of women,

Recognizing also, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and civil, political and fundamental freedoms for the advancement and empowerment of women,

Reaffirming the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the earliest possible date and at all levels by 2015 and that equal access to education and training at all levels, in particular, inter alia, in business, trade, administration, information and communication technologies and other new technologies, as well as the need to eliminate gender inequalities at all levels, is essential for gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication and to allow women's full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,

Recognizing that poverty eradication and the achievement and preservation of peace are mutually reinforcing, and recognizing also that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development,

Aware that, while globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have also made some women, especially in developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility, including in the agricultural sector, and that special support, particularly for women

who are small-scale farmers, and empowerment are necessary to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities of agricultural market liberalization,

Recognizing that enhanced trade opportunities for developing countries, including through trade liberalization, will improve the economic condition of those societies, including women, which is of particular importance in rural communities,

Expressing its concern that, while women represent an important and growing proportion of business owners, their contribution to economic and social development is constrained by, inter alia, the denial and lack of equal rights and lack of access of women to education, training, information, support services and credit facilities, salaries, and control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production,

Also expressing its concern about the underrepresentation of women in political and economic decision-making, and stressing the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programmes,

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, and the specialized agencies in facilitating the advancement of women in development,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[7]

2. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, and all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[4]

3. *Recognizes* the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication, as well as the need to elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with civil society, comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

4. *Stresses* the importance of creating a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all fields of life for the effective integration of women in development;

5. *Urges* Member States, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system to accelerate further efforts to increase the number of women in decision-making and to build their capacity as agents of change, and to empower women to participate actively and effectively in the development, implementation and evaluation of national development and/or poverty eradication policies, strategies and programmes, including, where appropriate, programme-based approaches;

6. *Urges* Member States to incorporate a gender perspective, commensurate with gender equality goals, into the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of national development strategies, and in this regard, calls upon the

[7] A/62/187.

United Nations system to support national efforts to develop methodologies and tools and to promote capacity-building and evaluation;

7. *Encourages* Member States to ensure inclusive and more effective participation of national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment in formulating national development strategies, including poverty eradication strategies, and calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts in this regard;

8. *Calls on* Member States to continue to increase women's representation and participation in government decision-making at all levels in development policy areas to ensure that the priorities, needs and contributions of women are taken into consideration by, inter alia, providing access to training; developing measures to reconcile family and professional responsibilities; and eliminating gender stereotyping in appointments and promotions;

9. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and the implications of violence against women and girls for the social and economic development of communities and States, and calls upon States to elaborate and implement plans of action to eliminate violence against women and girls;

10. *Also recognizes* the need to strengthen the capacity of Governments to incorporate a gender perspective in policies and decision-making, and encourages all Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders to assist and support developing countries' efforts in integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of policymaking, including through the provision of technical assistance and financial resources;

11. *Stresses* the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities that will generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

12. *Encourages* Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work and to initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

13. *Urges* all Member States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women, and to support women's access to legal assistance; and to encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in their policies and programmes;

14. *Recognizes* the role of microfinance, including microcredit, in the eradication of poverty, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment, notes in this regard the importance of sound national financial systems, and encourages the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions;

15. *Urges* all Governments to ensure women's equal rights with men and their equal access to all levels of education;

16. *Urges* Member States to encourage women entrepreneurs, including through education and training of women in business, administration and information and communication technologies, and invites business associations to assist national efforts in this regard;

17. *Calls upon* Governments to promote, inter alia, through legislation and family-friendly and gender-sensitive work environments, the facilitation of breastfeeding for working mothers and the provision of the necessary care for working women's children and other dependants and to consider promoting policies and programmes, as appropriate, to enable men and women to reconcile their work, social and family responsibilities;

18. *Urges* Member States to design and revise laws that ensure that women are accorded full and equal rights to own land, housing and other property, including through inheritance, and to undertake administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital and appropriate technologies and access to markets, and information;

19. *Recognizes* the need to empower women economically and politically, particularly poor women, and in this regard encourages Governments, with the support of their development partners, to invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, as well as to create opportunities for economic empowerment, in order to alleviate for women and girls the burden of time-consuming everyday tasks;

20. *Expresses its concern* at the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to violence, stigma and discrimination, poverty, and marginalization from their families and communities as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis, and calls upon Governments and the international community to intensify efforts towards the goal of universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010;

21. *Reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development,[8] integrating this goal into strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[5] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

22. *Recognizes* that a substantial increase in official development assistance and other resources will be required if developing countries are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, and that, in order to build support for official development assistance, cooperation will be needed in further improving policies and development strategies, both nationally and internationally, to enhance aid effectiveness;

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[8] See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

23. *Encourages* the international community, the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to continue to provide the necessary financial resources to assist national Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations conferences and summits;

24. *Urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

25. *Stresses* the importance of collecting and exchanging all relevant information needed on the role of women in development, including data on international migration, as well as the need to develop statistics disaggregated by age and sex, and in that regard encourages developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems;

26. *Calls upon* all organizations of the United Nations system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with the national development strategies;

27. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to integrate gender mainstreaming into all its programmes and policies, including in the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences, in accordance with agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997;[9]

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, including on integrating a gender perspective into national development strategies;

29. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session the sub-item entitled "Women in development".

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[9] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* and addendum (A/52/3/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1), chap. IV, sect. A, para. 4.